

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2006

The City of Springfield Council met in a work session in the Jesse Maine Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, September 18, 2006 at 6:00 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Woodrow, Lundberg, Fitch, Ballew, Ralston, and Pishioneri. Also present were City Manager Gino Grimaldi, Attorney Matt Cox from the City Attorney's Office, City Recorder Amy Sowa and members of the staff.

1. Priority of Services.

Finance Director Bob Duey and Budget Officer Bob Brew presented the staff report on this item. The City Council's 2006 goals include a one year target priority to "Conduct Council Discussion of Service Priorities". The Budget Committee provided resources for this exercise in the adopted budget for 2006/07. To address this target, staff has developed a draft list of City services and has identified 3 possible options for completion of a limited scope exercise that could then be utilized by the City Manager in completing a proposed budget for next fiscal year. The existing options range from staff prioritization with Council review, to Council completing the prioritization with citizen involvement. Other options could be developed at the Council's direction.

Mr. Duey said the City had done a good job in juggling funds and services in the past, but this would give a better idea of priority of services to help the City Manager come up with a proposed budget for FY07-08. He said this did not rank services individually, but rather ranked them in groups. This was the first step in the process that would continue over the next several years. Staff hoped to have something prepared by February 2007.

Mr. Duey said staff had looked at other cities that had gone through a similar process. Staff would be asking Council for direction on how to proceed. He referred to the options listed in the agenda packet.

Mr. Brew explained the design of the project and said he tried to make it as simple as possible. He said when looking at priority of services, the following were considered: identify services, rank services and validate through Council action. He reviewed the options as listed in the Council Briefing Memo in the agenda packet. The first was staff led, the second was Council led, and the third was public led. He said any of the options could include a public input component.

Councilor Pishioneri commended Bob Duey and Bob Brew for the document in the agenda packet. It was easy to understand and comprehensive. He said the City already ran very lean. He didn't feel Option 1 was not an option. He said the Council needed to be involved and he liked parts of Option 3. He suggested looking at Option 2, with parts of Option 3. He wanted to bring in citizens other than those on pre-existing committees.

Mr. Brew referred to Attachment B. He said Council could rank them in groups, not individual services within the groups.

Councilor Fitch thanked staff for starting this process. She said a cost benefit analysis was needed for each service. As examples, she referred to time involved in dealing with complaints and putting together agenda packets. She discussed the possibility of contracting out certain services. Knowing that could make a difference in how they were prioritized.

Mr. Duey said staff had considered including cost benefit analysis. He said in the first round they felt it might be better not to give the cost benefit analysis because it might be too much information. During the second round, they could look more closely at how the City could most efficiently provide the services.

Mr. Brew said there was also consideration of those services that were funded by fees or mandated. That too would be brought back in later.

Councilor Ballew said this was not a one shot thing and Council needed to be involved. She said it would be a continuum. She felt it was worthwhile for Council to do the ranking, but also worthwhile for the Executive Team (ET) to rank them. She suggested staff email the ranking so they could mark it electronically.

Mr. Brew said the information was on an excel sheet and could be ranked by the person reviewing it.

Councilor Ballew suggested taking the highest ranking items and conducting small meetings to discuss those things. She said it would be best to do cost benefit on the highest ranking items after merging the Council and ET rankings.

Councilor Fitch said the rankings could be done at a workshop together with Council and ET to allow feedback and discussion. That would allow time to do cost analysis on top priorities.

Councilor Pishioneri referred to Attachment C in the packet. He said the breakdown could include the cost benefit analysis. This was a good foundation to go into the cost part of it. He suggested adding cost to department and whether or not it was from dedicated funding or not.

Councilor Ballew said the number served for each service would also be beneficial to know.

Councilor Lundberg said she was happy to see this started. She said it was good to look at the services and how we could provide them. She said the Council should be involved as well as the staff as noted in Options 1 and 2. She said she liked Attachment C plus the additional information noted and agreed it should be a continuum.

Mr. Brew said he envisioned that Council would receive Attachment C for each service, and they could then look it over on their own time and bring it back for discussion.

Mayor Leiken said he liked Option 1 and 2, with most of the effort by the staff as they were the paid professionals. He referred to the Big Look regarding land use issues and how it might affect this process. City staff would be more aware of these types of issues.

Councilor Ralston said it would be a lot of work to read Attachment C for each service. Council needed to be involved, but he also wanted to hear the assessment from staff. He said this was very difficult. He said he had to look at services from another perspective. It would be more likely they would find certain departments rated lower than others. Staff and Council would need to come back multiple times to work through this.

Councilor Ballew referred to Attachment C and the reference to certain items being mandated. It didn't always say at what level something was mandated.

Mr. Brew said staff wrestled with that issue as well. He said the object was to get the critical facts on a single page to make it easier for Council. He said they didn't want it to be a huge burden on Council.

Councilor Pishioneri said he didn't want to minimize staff involvement, but felt Council needed to be involved and felt it was important to include outside people.

Councilor Ralston said it would be very complicated to involve the public. He said he agreed at the end to let the public review it. If the public was involved in every step, it could take years. Council and Staff needed to get it out the best we could.

Councilor Lundberg said it was Council's job to try to come up with the best solutions for their constituents. She would like to see public involvement in the normal process. There was no need for a separate public process.

Mayor Leiken noted that the same people were usually involved when we asked for public input. People were busy and expected the Mayor and Council to make these decisions.

Councilor Ballew said she would prefer the public react to a product rather than be involved in the entire process.

Councilor Fitch asked about the timeline for this process. She suggested allowing Hillary Wylie (council elect) to participate in the ranking and discussions if the timeline went into 2007.

Mayor Leiken said that had been done in the past and could be done.

Mr. Brew said the issue with public involvement included a lot of education if it involved people who were not normally involved in public issues. That was why many jurisdictions chose to use their Budget Committee or Planning Commission for the public input.

Councilor Woodrow said staff had done a great job. He recommended staff submit their list to Council with their ranking. Council would then take that list to the Budget Committee to review and prioritize. The list would then come back to Council for a final determination. There would be some public opinion involving the Budget Committee.

Mr. Brew asked for clarification about the process.

Councilor Woodrow said staff would bring back the results of each group's evaluation of the ranking.

Mr. Duey confirmed that Councilor Woodrow was referring to the Budget Committee citizen members, and not the Council members.

Councilor Lundberg said it did make sense to use the Budget Committee. The mid-year meeting with the Budget Committee could include this topic. Council had the final say.

Councilor Woodrow said he would prefer the Budget Committee met without Council. The Budget Committee would rank services independent of staff rankings. Staff could compile the two and bring them to Council.

Councilor Ballew said she thought Council needed to do a separate evaluation without seeing anyone else's.

Councilor Woodrow said that could be done.

Councilor Fitch said the final meeting could be with all three feedbacks.

Mayor Leiken said it would be good to do that after the November election.

Mr. Brew said all three groups could do this on their own as homework at the same time and staff could compile.

Councilor Fitch asked if ranking would be different before and after the election. Yes. She asked if the homework should be held off until after election. Yes. It would take staff some time to compile the Attachment C's.

Mr. Duey said they would try for a mid-November or early December time to target the groups' evaluation and bring back in mid-January for the final wrap-up.

Mr. Brew said the mid-year Budget Committee meeting would likely happen in January.

Councilor Fitch suggested the Budget Committee citizen members meet in November after the election to do their ranking.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:45 pm.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa

Sid Leiken
Mayor

Attest:

Amy Sowa
City Recorder